



Harnessing Web Power

Scenario:

Information flow from an organization is a constant.

Your Mission:

Harness this existing flow into a publicly accessible source of information.

Learn more about the
VISN 2 Website at—

www.va.gov/visns/visn02/about.html



So You Want To Be On The Web...

In planning your website, consider this list of standard questions for Web development projects. Use this list as a guide for refining and providing exactly what is needed as the content expert.

1. Mission

What is the purpose of your website? It could be: employee information/awareness; patient information or education; sharing resources; explain policies and procedures; distribute documents; highlight best practices; public relations/media/communications; add value to current services offered; educational or teaching new skills; orientation or help resources; information retrieval or collection via database.

2. Audience

Who is the audience? Does your audience have the access and training to utilize your information in a Web format? Why would they visit your Web page? Is the potential audience large enough to justify investing in Web development?

3. Value

What information or services can you put on the Web that will be of value? Can your site provide organization, time savings, convenience, cost savings, or services not available elsewhere? Are there peer resources on the VA or other websites that will add value? Will people come back for repeat visits?

4. Scope

How many potential visitors would the site affect? How does the content represented on the website fit in with the rest of the organization? How does it reconcile with stated organizational or national goals? (This question helps in assigning priorities when several projects are under development.)

5. Survey the Arena

Is somebody already doing this? What related Web resources already exist? What features or qualities would you like to emulate from other sites? How can you improve or localize what you see elsewhere? What information or service gaps can you fill?

6. Organizing Content Development

Who is the content author or expert? Are all parties represented on the site involved with providing content? What existing documents can provide content? What photos, charts or other graphics will add value to the message? Logistics regarding material in an electronic format. Can Web content be repurposed into alternate media?

7. Conceptualization and Prototyping

What are the main sections of the site? How will it be organized? What will the site look like, what feeling will it portray? What kind of navigation system will be needed? This is among the last steps.

8. Promotion

How will people find the website? Are you utilizing media beyond the Web to communicate with your audience? What other media printed brochures, documents, posters, bulletin boards, displays, flyers, presentations, e-mail, networking, meetings, press releases, etc. Are you putting your URL on everything? What is the public relations potential of your Web project. Does it enhance the internal or external view of the organization?

9. Updates and Maintenance

How often will content be added? How will people know what's new? What will be the process to update information? Encourage assignments and specify intervals. Who will have what specific responsibility?